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OBITUARY

Frank Sturgis Dies; Burglar In Watergate

Associated Press

MIAMI—Frank Sturgis, 68, a Watergate burglar who served 13 months in prison for the crime that helped bring down the Nixon administration, died Dec. 4 at the Veterans Affairs Hospital here. He had lung cancer.

Mr. Sturgis was a member of the burglary team caught after a break-in at Democratic Party headquarters at the Watergate Hotel in 1972.

"In Watergate, he claimed to his dying day that he was acting under orders of the White House," said his attorney, Ellis Rubin. "He had no idea that he would be put in prison as a result," he added.

Mr. Sturgis received a 1- to 4-year sentence for the burglary. He was denied a pardon by President Carter.

Interviewed last year for the 20th anniversary of the botched break-in that ultimately led to Nixon's resignation, Mr. Sturgis said he thought the United States was better off for the experience.

"It really screwed up the country," he said. "But it made our government a little bit stronger. . . . I feel the laws that came about after Watergate didn't give the president—whether it was Nixon or anybody else—the free rein to do what a dictator would do."

The Philadelphia-born former police officer, private investigator and rabid anti-communist was an active leader of PUND, a Miami paramilitary group intent on toppling Cuba's Fidel Castro.

Survivors include his wife and a daughter.